

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 112340

FOR US REP ICAO

FOLLOWING REPEAT LENINGRAD 1319 ACTION SECSTATE, MOSCOW  
INFO SEOUL, COPENHAGEN, TOKYO, HELSINKI AND STOCKHOLM  
APR 29.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L LENINGRAD 1319

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EAIR, CGEN, UR, US, KS  
SUBJECT: DEBRIEFING OR KOREAN PILOT AND NAVIGATOR

REF: LENINGRAD 1310, LENINGRAD 1318

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THEIR TRANSFER TO CUSTODY OF CONSUL  
GENERAL AT ONE P.M., APRIL 29, KOREAN AIRLINE (KAL) CAP-  
TAIN KIM CHANG-KYU AND NAVIGATOR YI JUN-SIK DESCRIBED IN  
DETAIL TO CONGEN OFFICERS BOTH PLANE INCIDENT AND THEIR  
SUBSEQUENT INTERROGATION. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS: (A)  
BOEING 707 WAS FIRST TO BE REINTRODUCED ON POLAR ROUTE  
SINCE 1976 TO MEET INCREASE IN AUTHORIZED FLIGHTS BUT UN-  
LIKE USUAL DC-10S LACKED INERTIAL NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT;  
(B) NAVIGATOR HAD NOT FLOWN ROUTE IN 707 SINCE 1976 AND  
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WAS UNAWARE THAT LORAN STATIONS NO LONGER EXISTED, (C)  
NAVIGATOR ASSUMES GYROSCOPE MALFUNCTIONED BUT HIS REQUEST  
TO EXAMINE EQUIPMENT WAS DENIED WHEN SOVIETS TOLD HIM  
EQUIPMENT WAS WORKING PROPERLY; (D) CONTRARY SOVIET CLAIM  
THAT SEVERAL INTERCEPTORS SIGNED HIM TO LAND, HE SAW ONLY  
ONE PLANE WHICH SIMPLY FLEW ON PARALLEL COURSE WITHOUT  
MAKING ANY SPECIAL SIGNALS; HE TRIED BUT WAS UNABLE COM-  
MUNICATE WITH INTERCEPTOR VIA VHF EMERGENCY TRANSMITTER  
SINCE MILITARY AIRCRAFT OPERATE ONLY ON UHF. SINCE PILOT  
COULD NOT SEE BEHIND FRONT EDGE OF WING AND STEWARDS WERE

BUSY SERVING MEAL, IT IS NOT EXCLUDED THERE WERE OTHER INTERCEPTORS, BUT NONE SAW THEM IF THEY WERE PRESENT; (E) KOREANS WERE PHYSICALLY WELL TREATED BUT KEPT APART, INTERROGATED SEPARATELY FOR FIVE OF SEVEN DAYS FOR TOTAL OF AT LEAST 30 HOURS; (F) DURING INTERROGATION, SOVIETS MADE SOME EFFORT TO PUT WORDS IN KOREAN MOUTHS AND WARNED THAT THEY WERE SUBJECT TO BETWEEN ONE AND FOUR YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR VIOLATING SOVIET BORDERS; (G) INTERROGATORS DID NOT PROBE FOR INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE U.S. LINK OR KOREAN DEFENSE DETAILS, STRAYING FROM INCIDENT ONLY TO EXTENT OF ASKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILIES IN KOREA; (H) "SUGGESTION THEY APPEAL TO BREZHNEV FOR LENIENCY" WAS SPRUNG ON KOREANS ONLY LAST DAY; THEY WERE ASKED TO WRITE UP "AKT" IN OWN HANDWRITING SUMMARIZING INCIDENT; SOVIETS SAW TO IT THAT WORDS LIKE "UNINTENTIONAL" WERE NOT INCLUDED IN TEXT, THOUGH KOREANS SAID THEY ALWAYS USED THIS WORD WHEN BEING INTERROGATED ABOUT INTRUSION; THEY WERE ASKED TO READ TEXT ALOUD INTO TAPE RECORDER AFTER WRITING IT UP, PRESUMABLY FOR FUTURE PROPAGANDA USE; (I) KOREANS DID NOT CLAIM TO HAVE RESISTED SIGNING AKT, EXPLAINING THEIR ACTION ON GROUNDS SOVIETS SAID THEY WERE GUILTY UNDER SOVIET LAW, EVEN IF THEIR INTRUSION WAS UNINTENTIONAL. (J) KOREANS WERE FLOWN TO CONFIDENTIAL

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LENINGRAD IN MILITARY AIRCRAFT FROM MILITARY AIRBASE NEAR KEM. END SUMMARY.

1. REPORT OF INCIDENT: FOLLOWING IS KAL NAVIGATOR AND PILOT VERSION OF CIRCUMSTANCES OF INCIDENT OVER SOVIET TERRITORY:

--DOWNED FLIGHT WAS FIRST BY KAL BOEING 707 OVER POLAR ROUTE IN RECENT YEARS. KAL FLEW BOEING 707'S ON POLAR ROUTE FROM 1973 TO 1976 BUT FOR LAST YEAR AND TWO MONTHS HAS BEEN USING DC-10. IN CONTRAST TO DC-10'S WHICH HAD THREE INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEMS (INS), BOEING 707 DID NOT HAVE INS EVEN THOUGH FLYING POLAR ROUTE. NAVIGATOR THEREFORE REQUIRED USE GYRO-COMPASS, LORAN, RADAR AND DOPPLER SYSTEMS. NAVIGATOR HAD FLOWN POLAR ROUTE OVER 120 TIMES, BUT CAPTAIN WAS ON FIRST POLAR FLIGHT AS CAPTAIN. --NAVIGATION ERROR WAS DUE TO MALFUNCTION OF GYRO-COMPASS SYSTEM. NAVIGATOR IS CERTAIN THAT HE WAS CORRECTLY ON ROUTE PAST GREENLAND. HOWEVER, AT SOME POINT THEREAFTER DUE GYRO-COMPASS FAILURE, COMPASS BEGAN FUNCTION LIKE MAGNETIC COMPASS. COMPASS READING INDICATED APPARENTLY CORRECT HEADING BUT COMPASS ACTUALLY BEGAN SHOW TURN. COURSE CHANGE WAS OF SUCH SLOWNESS AS TO BE UNDETECTED BY KAL CREW --WHEN QUESTION AIRCRAFT'S EXACT LOCATION CAME IN DOUBT, NAVIGATOR TRIED CHECK HEADING BY CONTACTING LORAN STATION SWITCH HE REMEMBERED FROM PAST EXPERIENCE, BUT THESE STATIONS WERE NO LONGER OPERATING. SINCE IT WAS STILL DAYLIGHT, HE

COULD NOT TAKE STAR FIX. EFFORT ESTABLISH FIX BY  
DEAD RECKONING WAS HINDERED BY SNOW COVERED  
LANDSCAPE AND PARTIAL CLOUD COVER.  
--DESPITE FAILURE SECURE ASSURED FIX, PILOT SAID  
HE THOUGHT HE STILL ON COURSE EVEN THOUGH HE HAD  
CROSSED OBVIOUS SHORELINE. HE WAS TRYING IDENTIFY  
LIGHTS OF CITY OBSERVED BELOW TO CHECK COURSE WHEN  
COPILOT SUDDENLY NOTICED FIGHTER FLYING AT SAME  
ALTITUDE, SPEED AND DIRECTION AS KAL AIRLINER.  
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PILOT ASKED COPILOT TO CHECK MARKINGS AND AFTER  
NOTING LARGE RED STAR ON TAIL CONCLUDED THAT KAL  
AIRLINER HAD ENTERED SOVIET TERRITORY.  
--ON SIGHTING SOVIET, PILOT TRIED TO CONTACT IT  
ON INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY FREQUENTLY BUT THERE  
WAS NO ANSWER. PILOT ATTRIBUTES THIS POSSIBLY  
TO FACT THAT KAL AIRLINE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM  
WAS VHF WHILE MOST MILITARY AIRCRAFT USE UHF AND  
SYSTEMS "MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE." PILOT SAYS FIGHTER  
STAYED WITH AIRCRAFT ONLY ABOUT MINUTE OR TWO BY HIS  
ESTIMATE ALTHOUGH SOVIETS LATER SAID IT WAS TWENTY  
MINUTES. PILOT DOES NOT DISCOUNT FACT THAT FIGHTER  
COULD HAVE BEEN THERE LONGER AND GONE UNDETECTED BY  
CREW DUE TO LIMITED SIDE VISABILITY FROM CABIN AND FACT  
THAT REMAINDER OF CREW WERE THEN BUSY WITH LUNCHEON  
ARRANGEMENTS.  
--SOVIET FIGHTER THEN DISAPPEARED SHORTLY AFTER BEING  
SIGHTED BY CREW. PILOT SAYS HE SAW NO SIGNAL BY SOVIET  
AIRCRAFT. HE DECIDED HOWEVER DESCEND AS SIGN OF  
UNDERSTANDING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT HE WAS OVER  
SOVIET TERRITORY.  
--ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH BEGINNING OF AIRLINER'S  
DESCENT, THERE WAS LARGE BANG AND CABIN DECOMPRESSION.  
PILOT THEN IMMEDIATELY DROPPED AIRCRAFT FROM 35,000  
FEET TO AROUND 4,000, DESCENDING AT 5,500 FEET PER  
MINUTE.  
--AFTER DESCENT, PILOT BEGAN SEARCH FOR LANDING PLACE.  
THIS WAS COMPLICATED BY DAMAGE WHICH AIRCRAFT HAD  
SUSTAINED. RUDDER WAS MALFUNCTIONING; AIRCRAFT WAS  
VEERING TO LEFT; AND PILOT HAD TROUBLE TRIMMING CRAFT.  
--PILOT SAYS HE SIGHTED NO SOVIET AIRCRAFT TRYING TO  
DIRECT HIM TO LANDING SPACE. IN SEARCH ON HIS OWN,  
HE CONSTANTLY FLEW TO LIGHTED UP AREAS HOPING TO FIND  
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LANDING FIELD. AFTER FLYING AROUND FOR HOUR AND HALF  
TO REDUCE FUEL LOAD, HE BEGAN OVERFLY POSSIBLE LANDING  
SIGHTS CHECKING EACH OUT FOR SUITABLE  
NEARBY VILLAGE GIVEN NEED FOR PROMPT AID TO PASSENGERS.

--ULTIMATE CHOICE WAS LAKE NEAR SMALL VILLAGE NEAR KEM.  
SOFTEST POSSIBLE LANDING WAS MADE TO AVOID BREAKING  
THROUGH ICE AND AIRCRAFT DELIBERATELY WAS BROUGHT TO  
HALT WITH LEFT LANDING GEAR ON LAND TO MINIMIZE DANGER  
SHOULD HOT ENGINES MELT THROUGH ICE.

--AFTER LANDING, PILOT HAD TIME TO ASK FLIGHT ATTENDANTS  
IF THEY HAD SEEN SOVIET INTERCEPTORS BUT THEY HAD NOT.

--PILOT AND NAVIGATOR WERE THEN SEPARATED FROM GROUP  
AFTER SOVIET BORDER GUARDS ARRIVED.

2. INTERROGATION. KOREANS WERE HELD IN SEPARATE ROOMS  
UNDER GUARD IN WHAT SOVIETS TOLD THEM WAS TOURIST HOTEL  
IN KEM. NAVIGATOR WAS INTERROGATED IN KOREAN BY OFFICIAL  
FROM MOSCOW; PILOT IN ENGLISH BY MAN DESCRIBING HIMSELF  
AS LOCAL TEACHER. KITCHEN STAFF WAS VERY SOLICITOUS  
THEY EAT WELL.

3. THEY WERE INTERROGATED FIVE OF SEVEN DAYS: 13 HOURS  
FIRST DAY, 9 HOURS SECOND, 8 HOURS LAST DAY AND BETWEEN  
5 AND 8 HOURS ON OTHER TWO DAYS. IN FAMILIAR FASHION,  
THEY WERE MADE TO REPEAT AND REPEAT THEIR VERSION OF  
INCIDENT, WITH INTERROGATORS CROSS-CHECKING FACTS FROM  
DOSSIER. SOVIETS PROBED WHO IN PARIS HAD GIVEN THEM  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLIGHT, AND ALL DETAILS OF HOW FLIGHT  
BEGAN AND DEVELOPED. BUT THEY DID NOT FOLLOW FAMILIAR  
PATTERN OF PRESSING FOR IRRELEVANT INFORMATION, E.G.,  
ON POSSIBLE LINKS WITH U.S. OR ON KOREAN DEFENSE PLANS.  
ONLY OUT-OF-LINE QUESTIONING CONCERNED DETAILS ABOUT  
THEIR FAMILIES IN SEOUL. PILOT WAS CONGRATULATED FOR  
HIS SKILLFUL LANDING.

4. THEY WERE NOT MISHANDLED OR THREATENED, PHYSICALLY.  
RATHER PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURE WAS EVIDENTLY BROUGHT TO  
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BEAR OF ISOLATION, LONG INTERROGATION, AND OCCASIONAL  
SHARP CONFRONTATION WHEN THEY DID NOT DESCRIBE THEIR  
ACTIONS TO SOVIET SATISFACTION. MOST IMPORTANT, THEY  
WERE WARNED THAT, UNDER SOVIET LAW, THEY WERE GUILTY  
OF VIOLATING SOVIET AIR SPACE, EVEN IF THEIR ACT WAS  
UNINTENTIONAL, AND THEY RISKED ONE TO FOUR YEARS IN  
PRISON.

5. ON APRIL 28 THEY WERE "ENCOURAGED" TO APPEAL FOR  
CLEMENCY AND FORGIVENESS TO CHAIRMAN OF PRESIDUM OF  
SUPREME SOVIET (I.E. BREZHNEV), AND TOLD IF THEY DID SO  
THEY WOULD BE RELEASED. EFFORTS TO INCLUDE ANY  
REFERENCE TO "UNINTENTIONAL" INTRUSION IN THE STATEMENT  
THEY WERE TOLD TO DRAW UP WAS IGNORED, WITH THE SOVIET  
ARGUING THIS WAS IRRELEVANT. THE PILOT WAS ASKED TO  
WRITE UP THE AKT IN KOREAN (IT SOUNDED VERY MUCH AS  
THOUGH HE WROTE WHAT WAS DICTATED TO HIM), AND THEN BOTH  
MEN WERE ASKED TO READ THE DOCUMENT ALOUD INTO A TAPE

RECORDER -- FOR OBVIOUS FUTURE PROPAGANDA USE. THEY  
WERE THEN TOLD THEY WOULD BE RELEASED THE NEXT DAY.

6. ON APRIL 29, THE SOVIETS DROVE THE KOREANS FIFTEEN  
MINUTES FROM KEM TO A MILITARY AIRBASE WHERE THEY WERE  
FLOWN IN TWIN TURBO PROP EXECUTIVE-CONTOURED MILITARY  
AIRCRAFT TO LENINGRAD, WHERE THEY ARRIVED AROUND NOON.  
THEY SAW A NUMBER OF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT AND HELICOPTORS ON  
THE AIRBASE, AND COVERED SHELTERS FOR INDIVIDUAL AIRCRAFT.  
KEM ITSELF APPEARED TO BE A GARRISON TOWN WITH ABOUT  
HALF THE MILITARY IN WHAT KOREANS WERE TOLD WERE BORDER  
GUARD UNIFORMS.

7. BOTH KOREANS APPEARED TIRED BUT NONE THE WORSE FOR  
WEAR FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE. THEY ARRIVED IN UNIFORM  
CARRYING THEIR BAGGAGE. BOTH EXPRESSED GREAT RELIEF,  
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IN FAIR ENGLISH, AT BEING IN AN AMERICAN HOME, AS  
THEY ATE A HEARTY LUNCHEON. BUCHANAN  
UNQUOTE VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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